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TYPHOON VERA, WORST IN HISTORY, DEVASTATES JAPAN

On Saturday, Sept 26, storm warnings were issued about the on-coming giant typhoon, traveling north-northwest toward Japan. Large boats put out to sea, and small ones scurried for cover. Railroad section chiefs were given discretion to halt operations if winds became perilous. Yet many preparations were futile against the most devastating typhoon Japan has experienced. Although meteorological records point to 1873's typhoon as the most powerful, the "Murata" typhoon of 1934 had been called the worst because of the record death toll of 2702 persons. Now even the present incomplete records of the current 15th typhoon ("Vera") overshadow the former ones.

When the typhoon hit Ushiozaki, at the tip of the Kii peninsula, on Saturday at 6:00 it brought winds of 210 kilometers per hour and spread over a circle with a 400 kilometer radius. It swept through one of Japan's densest areas, hitting coastal cities with 60 feet high waves which crumbled embankments. Nagoya, Japan's third city, and its southern neighbors were flooded, all transportation facilities stopped, electricity and communications stopped. Sweeping to the north, it hit nearly 4/5's of the nation: Aichi, Mie, Gifu, Yamanashi and from Toyama and Akita it rose toward Hokkaido, skirting its southern part and splitting into less powerful winds.

Local areas, busy repairing their own slight damage and philosophically acclimated to the early fall typhoons, were not at first

aware of the tremendous effects, but by Monday it had become clear to the entire nation that a major disaster had occurred. The total effects have been largely counted, with the worst being the large loss of life -- the Murata typhoon of 1934 listed a total of 2702 dead; already the "Ise Bay" typhoon (as it is now officially named) has caused a total of 3945 deaths. There are also 1741 persons officially missing, among them entire families. Over 12,736 have been injured. And the total number of victims, including others losses of land, home, or family, includes over one and 1/3 million.

Among the first inspection teams to visit the area were those led by Kentaro Buma, CWS; Toshimichi Nakayama, Kyodan; Rendall Davis, Kyodan. Premier Kishi also despatched a survey group and at an emergency meeting ordered that prompt and thorough aid be given all persons in the typhoon area. Through the Asahi Newspaper and Japan Air Lines, the first mercy flight was made on Sept 30, under the personal direction of Mr. Buma and with supplies contributed together with the Red Cross -- milk and flour were flown to Gifu (purchased with Asahi funds) and 4 car loads each of flour and milk to Aichi (Nagoya).

RESPONSE FROM ABROAD: As news of the disaster spread through the world, telegrams of sympathy and proffered aid were received. From the CWS Headquarters in Geneva, word of a \$15,000 grant was received and the money was immediately allocated to purchase powdered milk, to set up work camps, and to provide first aid supplies, as well as clothing. From New York came word of a shipment of 1 million vitamins and one thousand bales of clothing. A cable from the West Coast, US advised that two clothing shipments were made (one undesignated, one from Lutheran groups) and that a new collection would be made from October 4-11 on the entire West Coast.

PRESENT STATE: A clear understanding of the total destruction has now become possible and is even worse than first expected. Survivors are isolated on roof tops, making distribution of food or medical care almost impossible. Teams of boat and helicopter rescue personnel of the Self Defense Force, the US Air Force and Navy, and work camps under the direction of the CWS, and Rendall Davis at Kuwana (south of Nagoya), have struggled against the daily enlarging needs. People have feared further loss by thievery so refuse to leave their shaky roof-tops or isolated ground -- the maximum of 2000 persons daily has been evacuated, still leaving many who cannot be reached or will not move. It is estimated that 20,000 persons in Aichi alone must be evacuated. With succeeding days, cold rains and higher flood waters from broken levees have added to the misery and difficulties.

In the typhoon area, it is estimated that 32,084 houses were demolished with an additional 88,727 damaged and also 411,434 were flooded. Two large electric plants were disabled and no gas or electricity can be expected in the city for many weeks. Although the private and national railways have been largely restored, 30% are still out of order, with as high as 43 broken places on one main line. Relatives from other cities now crowd Nagoya Station, having come to aid or discover the unheard from family members. City transportation has been only partly restored, with nearly half of the buses and streetcars still disabled or area flooded. Highways are now under repair by Self Defense Forces.

DISEASE RAMPANT: With the flood came loss of drinking water and rapid spread of disease. The early cases of diarrhea have turned into a large scale spread of dysentery. Gas gangrene and tetanus cases have increased. The appearance of diphtheria and scarlet fever have complicated the situation -- hospitals are few and Nagoya University has been used for a ward. Teams of doctors sponsored by the Asahi News are roving the area in boats and a helicopter.

FOOD NEEDED: Distribution of food is hampered by the lack of boats as well as by the spread of the disaster. Profiteering appeared immediately as rice shot from its normal price of ¥124 to ¥400-500 per 1.5 kilogram. A small rice ball costs ¥20-30 (5-8¢) and a bottle of water is about ¥100 (26¢). CWS has sent a new shipment of rice, flour, powdered milk, and bread as well as buckets to be used to distribute water. Asahi News distributed \$300 worth of chocolate bars to tide over starving people. The government has changed its usual rule of aid, making available ¥75 worth of rice balls per person per day beyond the usual limited period of 6 days for a disaster area.

INDUSTRIAL LOSS: Nagoya, Japan's third largest city, is the center for many industries, nearly all of which have been incapacitated for several weeks or months. The Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Plant, shipbuilding yards, and many small business were flooded. Thousands of raw cotton and wool bales were soaked in the warehouses and spindles made unusable for the present. With the winter export season now approaching, these companies face an estimated loss of some 63 million yen. About 60% of the national production of wool and cotton products originate in this area so that loss of markets this year will effect the national income. The pearl industry was severely hurt, losing thousands of pearl rafts and sustaining heavy damage to its plants. A total of 237 boats have been reported lost or sunk.

The flooding has been complicated by the destruction of the Handa city embankment -- some 220 meters of the 9 meters-high embankment which was built in 1955 were swept away by 20 meters-high waves. With damage of over 30 million yen, it will take more than 3 weeks for temporary sealing. At high tide, water is still surging into low areas of Nagoya and Kuwana.

As usual, farmers were severely punished by the lashing winds. The rice loss -- offset only by the record yields in other area -- will reach about 150,000 tons. 19,040 hectares are flooded. In Aichi the orange and persimmon areas were devastated while Shizuoka had severe losses in the mandarin oranges area and Aomori farmers lost enough apples to fill one million boxes.

CHURCH DAMAGE AND LOSSES: The widespread loss is mirrored in the effect to the churches and their members in the area. At a special meeting called on Oct 2 at the Kyobunkan, the Rev. Masando Tajima, moderator of Nagoya Kyoku, gave a report. One church was almost obliterated, 4 more were seriously damaged, and the remaining 45 all sustained various amounts of damage. From the present knowledge it seems as if no member of the churches was killed but apparently no single home escaped without some damage.

COUNTER-MEASURES: In addition to the CWS unit, which will operate from the YMCA, and the work camp in Kuwana (Kyodan), it is reported that Doshisha University will send a work camp team. The NCC will have an inspection team visit the area this week, and its rescue mission committee will make concrete plans at that time for implementing the aid now being given. The following letter has been written as an appeal from the NCC:

Dear Brethren in Christ:

The most devastating typhoon of this century, sweeping across Central Japan, striking with full force Nagoya, the third largest city of the nation, and hundreds of other communities large and small, has left thousands of dead, tens of thousands of injured, hundreds of thousands of homeless hungry ill-clad people....

The National Christian Council and its affiliated bodies are earnestly striving to supplement the relief measures of the Government and the Red Cross, and to meet the tragic challenge of this hour in a manner worthy of the best Christian traditions. It would be most deplorable if, in this Centenary year of the Church in Japan, our witness should seem to be chiefly in word rather than in Deed.

We believe that our friends in Christ throughout the world will desire to lend us a helping hand in this time of fresh opportunity to show the love of the Master to distraught men, women and children. May God bless our mutual endeavor to the end that His will may be done on Earth.

Takeshi Muto, Chairman
National Christian Council of Japan

Saburo Nagai, Chairman
Department of Social Welfare
National Christian Council of Japan

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON "MISSION OF THE CHURCH" (NCC)

Considering the theme "The Mission of the Church in the Second Century of Evangelism in Japan," the NCC sponsored its third annual conference on Sept 16-18 at Amagi Sanso, Izu Peninsula. The 84 attending pastors and teachers found unity in worship from three traditions --Kyodan-related churches, Episcopalian, and Evangelical Lutheran. In the absence of Chairman Takeshi Muto of the NCC, the main sermon was delivered by the Rev. Keikichi Shirai, moderator of the United Church. Contrary to popular thought, he said, the evangelistic soil of Japan is a particularly rich one, enriched by generations of Buddhist teaching, Confucian influence, and by the witness and martyrdom of early Christianity. Though there seems to be no abundance of great preachers, as in earlier days, nor any present worthy successor to Kagawa, Japan must be taken by Christianity or it has no right to claim to be the absolute religion. As even the Tokugawa regime's efforts could not stamp out the Faith, so God in His providence has kept the way open for Protestant Christianity to make

its witness. The second century offers both opportunity and challenge.

Introducing the main addresses, the Rev. Kaname Tsukahara, Secretary of the General Affairs of NCC and of the Church Affairs Committee which set up the evangelism conferences, explained the relation of the conference to the work of the Study Commission on Evangelistic Strategem, which will make its final report in 1960. President Hidenobu Kuwada of Tokyo Union Seminary spoke on "The Theology of Evangelism in Japan: finding the basis of mission in our Lord's words, Mt 28.16-20, its background is to be seen as the whole sweep of God's work of redemption, now evident in the Church. With its content as the Gospel, communication or transmission in the spirit of the Incarnation is essential. In Japan, one particular need is for reverent, believing men who can keep before our minds the content of challenging movements. Also, the Christian idea of personality -- man as created by God and therefore dependent on grace -- must be taught with a clearer view of human history in the light of the Cross.

"The Condition of the Church in Respect to Evangelism" was presented by the Rev. Kozo Kashiwai. Emphasizing both the cause for gratitude in the present number of Christians and the need for concentration on serious evangelism for conversion he declared further: "The old idea of attainment of self-supporting status needs to be superseded by the attainment of vision and Spirit of the Antioch Church, the sense of missionary responsibility. Developing churches which are evangelistic and outreaching depends upon a central core of workers, which in turn necessitates thorough training, beginning from childhood and especially caring for our church-members in their 'teens.

Speaking on "The Social Situation of the Present Church," Asst. Professor Yoshiaki Iizaka of Peers School urged that the church must not be narrow-minded but must be fair in their treatment and judgment of all persons and circumstances. International affairs and acts must be included, particularly when one considers the verbal war about the meaning of "freedom" engaged in by the West and Russia. The WCC, criticized for having a "Bourgeois outlook" should beware of its role for enriching life by holding as wide a viewpoint as possible. The Church, on the other hand, has a role of leadership in opposing the "Consumption" society, so that men are led to envisage a higher ideal than materialism. No mere religiosity but confronting God in active dedication, understanding sin (personal) as well as social evil as that which must be opposed.

Dr. Masao Takenaka, Doshisha University, spoke on "Society, the Church, and the Christian Individual." Urging re-birth of the church, he warned against "self-secularization" as well as "self-sanctification" of the church, with the former typical of American Christianity and the latter of Japanese. Finding anew how to witness by deed ("Diakonia has been called 'a pantomime of salvation'") the Church must live its witness as both the Church Assembled and the Church Dispersed (H.R. Weber).

The final address, "Japanese Culture and the Christian Religion," was given by Professor Yoshimitsu Endo, Episcopal Theological Seminary, Tokyo. The age-old system of emperor-centered society, or more clearly to be seen as the clan or family system, is basic to the history of Japan. This was supplemented and aided by both a priestly system and a system of law and ritual. Thus, "logic" in the Western sense, has never developed. Neither was the structure reformed or revolutionized by modernism nor did "individual personality" (introduced through

Christianity) really influence the nation radically. Even the new nation, as characterized by a constitution, is not changed according to many people.

The report of the findings committee, led by Chairman Ken Saeki, recognized four important emphases of the conference: (1) Our churches, acknowledging "Jesus as Lord" should seek to understand changing society; (2) Having taken root in Japanese society in the first hundred years, the churches in the next century should positively confront problems of this culture; (3) As the Church is not only called together but called to serve, the importance of witness and service by the laity should be seen anew; (4) the first pre-requisite is "that there shall be earnestly sought a renewal of the Church itself."

(through the aid of notes by Dr. K. C. Hendricks, Associate Secretary, NCC)

NEW CHRISTIAN CENTER IN SOUTHERN JAPAN:

Word has been received of a new Christian Center which was opened at Tokushima City, Shikoku, in July. Its history begins with the work of C. A. Logan (1902-1940), Presbyterian Church U.S. In addition to funds gained from sale of land he had purchased, other funds were given in the US as a memorial to his work. The center, begun in January, 1959, was completed in July.

As a place for interdenominational fellowship and evangelism, it will be used for lectures, study groups, retreats, and for individual lodging. The large hall will accommodate 200 persons and Japanese rooms are available for 20 persons for lodging. Christian literature will also be sold and circulated from the center. It is now under the direction of J. H. Lancaster, W. P. Boyle, and secretary Jiro Yano.

HAPEL CENTER CHOIR TO FORM CHURCH

Former attenders of Tokyo Chapel Center (former Army and subsequent Air Force center which was closed in July, 1959) will be interested to know of plans by the choir leader, Dr. Ugo Nakada, and choir members. After many years of common service, it was decided to maintain unity through forming a new church. It will be the first "Choir" church, non-denominational, but actively aiding all evangelistic efforts.

